A Comparative Study of the Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur

A

Synopsis

of the Proposed Doctoral Thesis I English to be

Submitted to

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Synopsis As Per the Performa (Appendix – 1)

Title of the Thesis:

A Comparative Study of the Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur

Introduction:

The South-Asian women writers have made significant inroads into the literary world winning the top most international literary awards. They give voice to their concerns and experiences. Most of them have foregrounded women as subjects of their works but social, cultural, historical, economic, political and other significant concerns also find articulation in their works. The reader is motivated by two interrelated concerns: firstly how can he understand the question of women's voice in South Asian context? and secondly how do women writers mobilize the category of gender to define alternative understanding of individual and community in this region?

Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur are significant South-Asian women writers who deal with the contemporary issues of the society. They choose women as their subjects who are marginalized in their society. The Feminist critics who have demonstrated that concern about women status in colonial and postcolonial contexts often have less to do with changing the actual material condition of their lives and more to do with patriarchy. In the present research work the endeavor would be to focus on tradition vs modernity, man-woman relationship and woman's repression, revolt and resolution that Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur have dealt with in their novels.

A Brief Review of the Work Already Done in the Field:

The fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur has been reviewed widely and largely, indicating the popularity of their works both in India and abroad. A number of articles have been published on their writings. Novy Kapadia has written about "*The Parsee Paradox in Bapsi Sidhwa's 'The Crow Eaters"*' in *Commonwealth Fiction*: *Vol.2.* Nirupa K. Rani has discussed about the gender discrimination in "*Gender and Imagination in Bapsi Sidhwa's Fiction" in Fiction of Nineties.* Jagdev Singh has written about the Parsi perception on partition with reference to Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy Man " Ice- Candy-Man: A Parsi Perception on the Partition of India"* in *The Literary Criterion*, Jill Didur's article *"Cracking the Nation: Gender, Minorities, and Agency in Bapsi Sidhwa's Cracking India"* is seen in *Ariel*. Dr Lazmi Sharma's "*Emergence of New Woman in Novels of Manju Kapur*" appears in http://Literaryindia.com. Subhashree Mukherjee has written "*Modernity vs Tradition*: *An Insight into Manju Kapur's Difficult Daughters*" in *Cyber Litrature.* Anupama Choudhary's "*Chutnification of English*: *Techniques in the Novels of Manju Kapur*" can be seen in *Points of View*. A Feminist Study of Manju Kapur's Novels has been made by Ashok Kumar in a book form.

But it is observed that a comparative study of the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur is not carried out by any writer in a single book form. The present project attempts to compensate this inadequacy in the criticism of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur.

Objectives:

Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur are gynocentric novelists. Both of them vocalize their experiences and delegitimize the culture of silence. In their works they question every aspect

of social order – the pillar of community – marriage, motherhood and control of sexuality with respect to their own individual culture and religious traits.

To study and analyze these aspects with respect to Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur's novels and establish a comparison between their approaches to the subject is the main objective of the thesis.

Noteworthy Contribution in the Field of the Proposed Work:

To select the noteworthy contribution to Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur's criticism is a difficult job. However, the following may be considered as outstanding contributions to the study of their art. Since they are already listed in the Bibliography only a few are mentioned below:

Dhawan, R.K. and Novy Kapadia. *The Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa*. New Delhi: Prestige, 1996. Print.

Kapadia, Novy. *Parsi Fiction*. Vol.1. New Delhi: Prestige.2001. Print

Khan, M.Q.and A.G khan. *Changing Faces of Women in Indian Writing in English*. New Delhi: Creative, 1995. Print.

Kumar,V. L.and V. N.Narendra. *Parsee Novel*. New Delhi: Prestige, 2002. Print.

Singh,Anita. "Stairway to the Stars: Women Writing in Contemporary Indian English Fiction." *Parnassus* 1 (2009): 13-28. Print.

Singh, Sudista Prasad. "Feminism in Manju *Kapur's* A Married Woman." *Cyber Literature* 21.1 (June 2008): 70-82. Print.

Verma, Daisy. "Tradition versus Modernity in Difficult Daughters." *Journal of English Literature and Language* 4.1 (June 2010): 74-77. Print.

Warake, N.S. "Quest for Identity and Survival: A Study of Manju Kapur's *Home*." *Journal of Literature, Culture and Media Studies* 2.4 (July-Dec. 2010): 268-278. Print.

Proposed Methodology:

The proposed methodology for this project is based on a brief survey of South Asian women writers with special reference to their novels in English. The analytical method will be followed. A detailed study of all the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur will be made. In each chapter different aspects of their works will be dealt with. It will be a study of the interplay between tradition and modernity, man- woman relationship and the portrayal of repression-revolt and resolution. To study various aspects in such detail all of their novels will be read and examined closely.

The documentation of the thesis will be based on *MLA Hand Book for Writers of Research Papers,* VII Edition. The following books will also be referred:

Anderson, Jonathan and Millicent Poole. *Assignment and Thesis Writing*, New Delhi: Wiley, 2001. Print.

Barrett, Arnaudet. *Approaches to Academic Reading and Writing*. New Delhi: Prentice, 1984. Print.

M. Williams, Joseph. Style *Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. New Delhi: Longman, 2010. Print.

Oshima, A. and Anna Hogue. *Introduction to Academic Writing.* New Delhi: Longman, 1977. Print.

Expected Outcome of the Proposed Work:

The expected outcome of the project is a thesis on the achievement of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur as South Asian women novelists and their comparison. The resulting work may contain the following tentative chapterisation:

Chapter I- Introduction

A. South Asian Writings in English by Women Writers

This is a brief survey of South Asian writings in English by women writers with special reference to their novels and the themes of their works.

B. Bapsi Sidhwa, A Significant Parsi Voice in Pakistan

It will focus on Bapsi Sidhwa's life, profession and works and all that go to make her a prominent novelist of Pakistan.

C. Portrait of Manju Kapur, An Indian Artist

A biographical sketch of Manju Kapur with celebration of her literary genius will be attempted.

Chapter II- Interplay between Tradition and Modernity

Modernity is a product of the enlightenment and is oriented to a future controlled by reason, whereas nationalism appeals to an emotional attachment to the tradition. Tradition is deep-rooted in the people and in the traditional system society is organized around gender division giving

more space to male dominance. Injustice and inequality are meted out to women in traditional patriarchal system. Modern women face inequality, injustice and discrimination and finally break the traditional laws, if compelled to be emotionally starved. The dualism of tradition and modernity as reflected in the novels of Manju Kapur and Bapsi Sidhwa will be explored. The confrontation of the society with the onslaughts of the ongoing phenomenon of modernization has unfortunately led to the dehumanization of social environment and the depersonalization of human beings.

Chapter III-A Focus on Man- Woman Relationship

Under this heading, the much celebrated theme which occurs abundantly in Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur's works will be discussed. The variety, the uniqueness, the commonness, the warmth and coldness in man-woman relationship portrayed in Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur's novels will be focused.

Chapter IV – The Portrayal of Repression, Revolt and Resolution

Women are oppressed in male dominant society. Being cheated and subjugated by males these women rebel against their subjugation. In their rebellion they do not stoop to conquer rather break the traditions of the society and resolve to discover themselves and establish themselves in society. Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur have portrayed the women characters who revolt against the repressive forces of society for their identity and place in the society. The rigorous efforts made by their women characters in this respect will be analyzed minutely in this chapter.

Chapter V- Comparison between Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur

On the basis of the aforementioned aspects dealt with in their novels the similarities and dissimilarities between the approaches of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur will be analysed. It will be observed that in what way they resemble and how they differ.

Chapter VI – Conclusion

This chapter would be a summing up of the assessment made in the earlier chapters and would conclude with the themes, language, mode of narration and craft of Bapsi Sidhwa and Manju Kapur in multi-dimensional milieu of Pakistani and Indian society respectively.

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Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. London: Penguin, 1989. Print.

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This synopsis is hereby forwarded to the Research Degree Committee for approval.

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